

# national park service

For Immediate Release  
February 28, 2001

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## **Point Reyes Beaches Littered with Paraffin Wax Material**

The United States Coast Guard, Point Reyes National Seashore, California Department of Fish & Game Oil Spill Prevention and Response (OSPR) and National Marine Sanctuary personnel are involved in investigating the apparent discharge of a paraffin material within Drakes Bay. The paraffin material lines the high tide line for over four miles of scenic Drakes and Limantour Beaches. The material was first sighted on Sunday by park visitors and staff.

The paraffin material has been collected by the U.S. Coast Guard and park rangers and samples have been sent for analysis. The National Park Service and U.S. Coast Guard hope to identify the material and the possible source of the contaminant. Coast Guard contractor crews will be on-site this week to remove the paraffin material from park beaches.

The National Park Service found several dead seabirds in the contaminated area during surveys today, but have not determined the cause of their death. Point Reyes biologists are concerned that material in a liquid state can damage bird feathers and that the small pieces of paraffin may be ingested by migrating and resident shorebirds.

Drakes and Limantour Beaches are utilized by hundreds of thousands of park visitors each year. The offshore Gulf of the Farallones is considered one of the most productive marine areas in the world. Because it is part of Point Reyes National Seashore and the Gulf of the Farallones Marine Sanctuary, marine discharges of any nature are prohibited in the area.

Please visit our expanded website at [www.nps.gov/pore](http://www.nps.gov/pore) and visit the California Fedpage at [fedpage.doi.nps](http://fedpage.doi.nps) for information on all Federal natural resource agencies in California.

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**Point Reyes National Seashore**

**Point Reyes Station, California 94956**